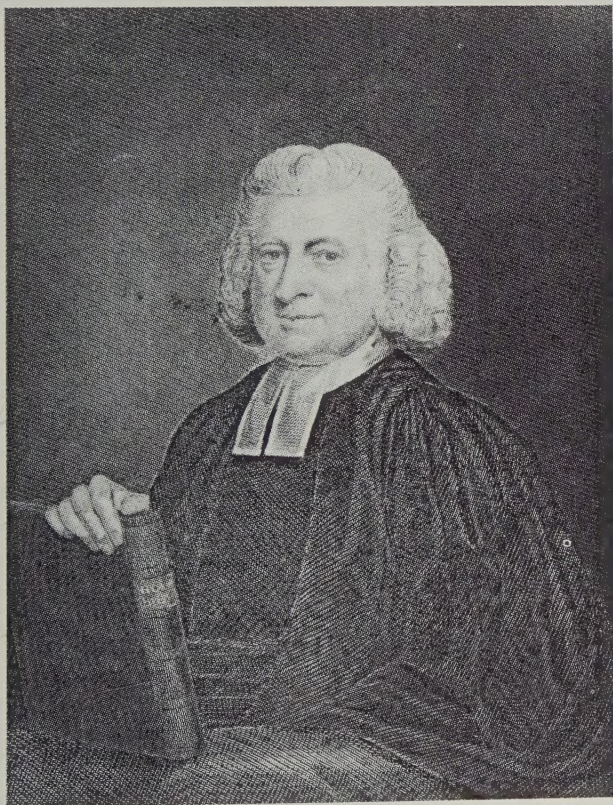


# The Hymn

JULY 1955

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CHARLES WESLEY

1707-1788

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## The President's Message

Four items come to mind of special interest at this time.

First, the Annual Meeting of the Society in New York on May 14th. Some have felt that it was one of the best we have had. It brought the results of the year into focus, and we may well be proud of what has been accomplished. The details of this occasion will be given in the Summer News Letter.

Second, the report on the Chapters of the Society and their activities. During the year, a strong chapter has been organized in Northern California. Rev. Toivo Harjunpaa of Berkeley is the President. Another strong chapter has been organized in Central Pennsylvania whose President is Rev. G. Martin Ruoss of Mechanicsburg. Special mention should be made of the part played by Prof. Harvey D. Hoover of Gettysburg, Pa., in the organization of these chapters. Local Committees of the Society have been formed in Ohio at Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati. Correspondence about chapter organization has been carried on with Oklahoma City; Princeton, Minnesota; Bradford, Pa.; Niles, Michigan; Nashville, Tenn.; Beaumont, Texas; Youngstown, Ohio; Cleveland, Ohio; and Detroit, Michigan. It is very inspiring to us in the central office of the Society to see how actively the various chapters are carrying on under devoted and able local leadership.

Third, the Louis F. Benson One Hundredth Anniversary Celebration. This was initiated at the Annual Meeting with a simple but impressive Hymn Festival honoring this distinguished hymn writer and interpreter. Various items of Benson literature will be available in the early autumn; and it is hoped that many communities will have Benson observances during 1955.

Fourth, The Hymn Society booth at the International Sunday School Convention at Cleveland, Ohio, July 27-31, 1955. The Society is hoping to have a spot in the Convention building where our material can be on display, and where interested visitors can learn about our work. This Convention draws several thousand people from all over the continent; and it seems an unusual opportunity to acquaint them with what we are doing. One of the problems related to this project is finding people who will help to tend the booth. If you are to be in Cleveland for the Convention, and are willing to help in this way, will you kindly advise me at our office in New York.

—DEANE EDWARDS



# The Hymn

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## The Editor's Column

### THE USE OF HYMN PRELUDES AND ANTHEMS

Organists who truly desire to improve the standard of congregational hymn singing are alert to the important role played by organ compositions and anthems based on hymn tunes. Perusal of programs and service sheets from many churches in various denominations indicates wide usage. This is not surprising in view of the large quantity of such material coming from all of the publishers.

There is presently a trend toward more unison singing by congregations. This is evidenced by the tendency of hymnal editors to pitch hymn tunes in lower keys than formerly. Within limits which are well known to church musicians unison hymn singing is a good means of enlisting hearty singing, especially by men of the congregation. The increase in unison singing has meant a greater emphasis upon the "melody" of the tune as opposed simply to its harmonic quality; this, in turn, has made persons in church more conscious of the hymn melody upon which the organ or choral composition is based.

Unfortunately, for the congregation at least, there are some so-called hymn preludes which are so written as to leave even the most astute musician wondering whence the association with the tune alleged to be its inspiration. The Editor recently had occasion to hear a recording of a prelude based on the familiar tune MELCOMBE. Considerable effort was expended to ascertain the melody, but in vain.

Bach knew what he was about when he composed his immortal choral preludes. He based them on tunes known and familiar to his congregations. However, many of those same tunes are not known by modern churchgoers. It is a wise organist who at least prints an English translation of the text (or its first line) to identify it for those who are to hear it. Many organists consider it helpful to play the basic four-part harmonization of the tune before playing one or more variations.

Recognizing the importance of this area of hymnic interest, the Editors of THE HYMN are happy to announce that Mr. Edward H. Johe, distinguished organist and choirmaster of First Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio, has consented to become an Assistant Editor, and will conduct a regular department in this periodical, devoted to review and listing of newly-published materials for organ and choral use, based on hymn tunes and texts.



# Poetry and Piety In Charles Wesley's Hymns

EDWARD HOUGHTON

"THAT WHICH IS of infinitely more moment than the Spirit of Poetry is the Spirit of Piety . . . When Poetry thus keeps its place as the handmaid of Piety, it shall attain, not a poor, perishable wreath, but a crown that fadeth not away." Thus writes John Wesley in his Preface to *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, 1779. The handmaid of piety - that is a fit description of the 525 hymns here introduced; and, following Dr. Henry Bett, we may reckon some 473 of them Charles Wesley's work. (*The Hymns of Methodism*, 3rd ed., 1945, ch. 3).

In the story of English letters, this poetry is the more interesting for having come from an age of poetic sterility. "For a . . . period . . . say, from the death of Henry Vaughan to the youth of Robert Burns, the lyrical note was never heard in these lands . . . Lyrical sincerity and spontaneity reappear first of all in the hymns of Methodism." (*Ibid.*, p. 12.) Like Wordsworth, and a half-century before Wordsworth, Wesley used "the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation" and his poetry was what the great poet averred all good poetry to be, - "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling." (Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 3rd ed., 1802) But this poetry was always the handmaid of piety, the poet's mission not any Lyrical Revival but an Evangelical Revival, the bringing of men to God. Wordsworth turned for spontaneity to "nature and the language of the senses" ("Tintern Abbey"). Wesley turned to God and found spontaneity without looking for it, so that it indeed was spontaneity:

Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on thee:  
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,  
Still support and comfort me:  
All my trust on thee is stayed,  
All my help from thee I bring;  
Cover my defenseless head  
With the shadow of thy wing. (1, See p. 86)

a well-known stanza which has all the passion and the reality that we most essentially mean by poetry. Indeed, the passion is here even more elemental and the reality more direct than in the Lakeland poet. "Poetry," insisted Wordsworth, takes its origin from emotion *recollected in tranquillity*." True, "the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradu-

ally disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind." (The classic example being, of course, "I wandered lonely as a cloud.") But he had already had the frankness to make the logical inference from his basic submission, namely that while the Poet "describes and imitates passions," his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering." Now that is a distinction, in general possibly true, which hardly holds when we come to the most authentic utterance of evangelical religion. Nobody can suppose that in this very great hymn we have, not a Christian man at prayer but only the cherished recollection of when he did pray. No man not in the real presence of Christ can write:

Just and holy is thy name,  
I am all unrighteousness;  
False and full if sin I am,  
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with thee is found,  
Grace to cover all my sin . . . (1)

Here is the true encounter which is the heart of evangelical religion. There is action in the hymn and it takes place *now*, as each penitent believer makes Wesley's prayer his own. A sentimental hymn might recollect "seasons beautiful and rare." A far truer hymn might ask

Where is the blessedness I knew  
When first I saw the Lord?

The *great* hymns have the grand immediacy of faith:

By faith we know thee strong to save:  
(Save us, a *present* Saviour thou!)  
Whate'er we hope, by faith *we have*,  
Future and past subsisting *now*. (2)

What then, we have in Wesley, is *poetry*, the lyric spirit of spontaneity, aliveness, reality; what we have in Wesley that we miss in the *Lyrical Ballads* and *Pastoral Poems* is *evangelical piety*. "Poetry the handmaid of Piety" serves a *live orthodoxy*. There is an objectivity and a subjectivity of the Gospel - both; and Wesley gives us both, in their essential unity. He gives us "Historic Christianity applied to the individual soul and the sharing of



this experience with other men who know it too." (Bernard Manning, *Hymns of Wesley and Watts*, p. 29.) To read him with sympathy and intelligence is to step right inside the pages of the New Testament, indeed right into the New Testament scene:

Would Jesus have the sinner die?  
Why hangs he then on yonder tree?

- His Cross is but yonder!

What means that strange expiring cry?

- for our ears have heard it, a cry which brings us yet nearer:

(Sinners, he prays for you and me):  
"Forgive them, Father, O forgive!  
They know not that by me they live."

The central fact of our faith is thus dramatically represented to us, and a man with no religious, or even historical, interest in that fact could conceivably be interested in the *literary* device by which it becomes experience for us - the device of addressing us as fellow-bystanders at the Cross. But the mere literator would not be interested long. For here is no subjective fancy. Wesley (unlike Matheson - "O Cross that liftest up my head") leaves us no doubt what cross that is, the hymn is about. It is the Cross of Jesus, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world:

Dear, loving, all-atoning Lamb,  
Thee by thy painful agony,  
Thy bloody sweat, thy grief and shame,  
Thy Cross and passion on the tree,  
Thy precious death, and life, I pray:  
Take all, take all my sins away! (3)

I mention Matheson - it might seem with less than the sympathy I ask for Wesley. Here is the verse, the most celebrated he ever wrote:

O Cross that liftest up my head,  
I dare not ask to fly from thee:  
I lay in dust life's glory dead,  
And from the ground there blossoms red  
Life that shall endless be.

These lines are germane to our purpose because they are so entirely comparable in emotional intensity yet so utterly lacking in all other marks of a Wesley hymn. There is nothing scriptural

here. We cannot but regard with dubiety this hypostatizing the Cross: there is no Saviour on this cross, it is not the Cross concerning which

Faith cries out: 'Tis he, 'tis he,  
My God, that suffers there! (4)

We sense more of Proserpine and the year's renewal than of Jesus and the resurrection. In all, we miss Wesley's impassioned devotion to Christ:

O let thy love my heart constrain . . . (3)  
And bathe, and wash them with my tears . . . (3)

This man as he writes about the Cross is on his knees before the Cross, praying to the Crucified. If he is writing poetry, and he is, that is incidental, for here poetic imagination is but handmaid to that evangelical piety which is the temper proper to faith, the true response to Christ:

O let thy love my heart constrain . . .

The Cross is no more drama but gospel. It is not a spectacle but commitment. I am no longer bystander, but disciple, and missionary. I am in the world, not of Shakespeare but of Paul.

That wholly characteristic hymn well illustrates the most important thing about Wesley - the full New Testament orthodoxy of his personal, passionate religion. He gives us New Testament fact as personal faith, and the faith is nothing without the fact. It is vague to the point of falsehood merely to say that Wesley is an experimental hymn writer. He is interested only in the *evangelical* experience, which is the experience of God as He comes to us in His Evangel, in His Word, in Christ. There is an Evangel before there is any evangelical experience, and there is a God before there is any Evangel. Emotion is incidental to this experience (though a normal incidence), and even moral renewal is only consequent upon it (though its necessary consequence); God is essential to it. Faith, in the Bible, and for Wesley, always and only means *faith in God*.

Faith lends its realizing light,  
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly,  
The Invisible appears in sight,  
And God is seen by mortal eye. (2)

The value of these lines depends upon the truth of God. Their message would be true had Wesley never lived and the hymns



not been written - but not if Christ had never come. There is no saving experience without saving faith, and there is no saving faith without saving truth. What Christ *is for me* rests on who Christ *is*:

Thou, the Father's only Son,  
Pleased he ever is in thee;  
Just and holy thou alone,

then:

Full of grace and truth for me. (5)

The complete misunderstanding of Wesley would be to consult him on religion but not on theology. If his theology falls, so does his religion. Our doctrinal formulations may vary up to a point, but only up to a point, and not as to fundamentals, if it is to be the same religion we are talking about. We might, for instance, point out that, whereas "*My God* is reconciled" departs from such New Testament scriptures as II Cor. 5:18-20 in an important particular, it is fundamental New Testament proclamation that "His blood atoned for all our race." (8) The heresy that "feeling" (in its modern sense) or "enthusiasm" (in its eighteenth century definition) is the essence of or any substitute for Christian fact and truth is not a Wesleyan one. Wesley's intuitive genius is only for the interpretation of the Catholic Faith. His poetry is the hand-maid of piety. What matters finally is the piety, the faith, God.

In nothing is Wesley more impressive than this, that if it is great doctrine we are after, then it is to hymns empirical we turn. At the point of experience, where our well-intentioned selves would easily flounder in a morass of honeyed subjective phrase, Wesley is at his strongest and soundest and most objective. The more intimate, the more orthodox - that is his amazing ratio. It is Paul's ratio, and hardly paralleled for consistency after Paul. Thus, the wisdom and the mystery is

Wisdom in a mystery  
Of bleeding love,

and Christ's mystic lesson is

. . . the lesson of thy Cross (6)

or, in a remarkable hymn whose powerful mysticism passed all the tests of so orthodox a Christian as Bernard Manning, ". . . that happiest place" (what daring - "happiest!")—is the place called *Calvary* (his italics for his all-important word); and if ". . . saints in an ecstasy gaze" it is to ". . . hang on a crucified God."

(7) "Wesley is at the height of his inspiration: nothing short of inspiration keeps the daring emotion sane and reverent and orthodox;" (Manning, *op. cit.*, p. 29) and Manning further names "Wrestling Jacob" as an example of the same thing. This, Wesley's greatest poem, well displays the character of his mysticism. Wesley is mystical only on such definition as would not make "evangelistic mystic" a self-contradicting term. The audacious intimacy of these lines does not come of any fusion or confusion of personal identity. Wesley is not wrestling with himself but with One who is Other. The dialogue is between "I" and "thou," and "thou is not "I." The relationship is a faith-relationship, and if it is, as indeed it is, "the faith that conquers God," (J.E. Rattenbury, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns*, p. 97) that is because God is evangelically known, because He, who is not a man, comes to men in His Word. It is gloriously, but only,

*Through faith I see thee face to face,  
I see thee face to face and live! (9)*

But begin from the other side, and you are soon in the same territory. Begin with orthodoxy, with

Our God contracted to a span (10)

and it takes five more Wesley verses to reach the uttermost conclusion,

And man shall all be lost in God.

Begin with the Gospel history, true had we never believed; had we never been born; begin with the splendid objectivity of a verse in which we are not actors:

Love' redeeming work is done,  
Fought the fight, the battle won;  
Lo! our Sun's eclipse is o'er,  
Lo! he sets in blood no more

and we end with the history of our own souls:

King of glory, soul of bliss,  
Everlasting life is this,  
Thee to know, thy power to prove,  
Thus to sing and thus to love! (11)

The final guarantee of Wesley's clear orthodoxy is his hymns of the Spirit. In them, the truth of God is *inwardly* attested but always by that *Holy Spirit* who witnesses *with* our spirit but is essentially *other than* our spirit and not other, in very immanence,



than transcendent God, "—the Gift, *and Giver too!*" (12) It is the Most High who comes Most Near, the Wholly Other who is wholly given:

*God, the everlasting God,  
Makes with mortals his abode;  
Whom the heavens cannot contain,  
He vouchsafes to dwell in man. (12)*

Wesley is throughout innocent of any *mere* immanentism, and that because, for him, as for Paul and the New Testament, the Spirit is not *mere* Spirit or even, we speak reverently, *mere* God but always

. . . the Spirit of thy Son,  
To make the depths of Godhead known,  
To make us share the life divine. (13)

It is the Spirit of God and of Christ (Rom. 8:9-11) who indwells us. Wesley knows ~~nothing~~ about

The sunshine . . . of God,  
The life of man and flower,  
The wisdom and the energy  
That fills the world with power,

but he knows very much about

The Witness of Jesus returned to his home. (14)

To Wesley's thoroughly evangelical understanding, the work of the Spirit is integral with the work of Christ and answers to the great objective facts of the Gospel. It would take no higher critic to tell which of these is his: this -

Thought answereth alone to thought,  
And soul with soul hath kin;  
The outward God he findeth not  
Who finds not God within,

or this -

His Spirit answers to the blood

(that is, to Christ's atoning death as the objective ground of faith)

And tells me I am born of God. (8)

Faith that is by the Holy Spirit is *the* Faith of the Church, and (I Cor. 12:3) it is only by Him I can seriously repeat the Church's most fundamental creed:

## THE HYMN

No man can truly say  
 That *Jesus is the Lord*,  
 Unless thou take the veil away  
 And breathe the living word:  
 Then, only then we feel  
 Our interest in his blood,  
 And cry, with joy unspeakable,  
 Thou art my Lord, my God! (15)

It is this radically *Christian* doctrine of the Spirit that serves Wesley's radically *Christian* doctrine of experience:

True recorder of his passion,  
 Now the living faith impart,  
 Now reveal the great salvation,  
 Preach his Gospel to our heart. (16)

Jesus Christ is the whole of Christianity and for the Christian the whole meaning of experience:

To him that in *thy name* believes,  
 Eternal life *with thee* is given;  
 Into himself he all receives,  
 Pardon, and happiness, and heaven. (2)

John (Wesley), sacrificing the word (not the fact!) "happiness," brought in the greater word, that *holiness* without which no man shall see the Lord. All is given in Christ, "Pardon, and holiness, and heaven."

"To no man, not even to Luther, has Christ been more completely Alpha and Omega" (Rattenbury, *op. cit.*, p. 153)

Jesus, the first and last. (17)

He is the sum of our religion: there is nothing more:

Thou, O Christ, art all I want,  
 More than all in thee I find. (1)

The uttermost in religion, holiness, is nothing else than the exaltation of Christ in a Christian man:

Now let me gain perfection's height,  
 Now let me into nothing fall,  
 Be less than nothing in thy sight,  
 And feel that *Christ* is all in all. (18)

"An outstanding feature of Wesley's poetry is the width of his psychological description and the penetrating analysis of the emotional states of a man under differing circumstances," remarks Dr. T. B. Shepherd, adding: "It is as if the whole of the



characters in *The Pilgrim's Progress* wrote religious poems before, during, and after each adventure; and to these might be added Mr. Badman's descriptions of his feelings." (*Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 106.) The suggestion is an interesting one, but misleading if it conveys the impression that Wesley's, or for that matter Bunyan's real interest and concern is the psychology of religion and not *religion*, religion that is of the grace of Christ and by the Word of God and to His sole glory:

Our strength thy grace, our rule thy word,  
Our end, the glory of the Lord. (19)

That is what matters in Christian pilgrimage, and not the feelings of Mr. Badman, Mr. Charles Wesley or anybody else.

All I have tried to say about these hymns is summed up in the full Trinitarian orthodoxy of this characteristically evangelical and experiential hymn, which our last British editors (1933) unintelligently decapitated<sup>\*</sup> but which you shall have almost entire; it is the Aaronic blessing raised to the full stature of New Testament faith:

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
One God in Persons Three,  
Bring back the heavenly blessing, lost  
By all mankind, and me.

Thy favour, and thy nature too,  
To me, to all restore;  
Forgive, and after God renew,  
And keep us evermore.

Eternal Sun of Righteousness,  
Display thy beams divine,  
And cause the glory of thy face  
Upon my heart to shine.

Light in thy light O may I see,  
Thy grace and mercy prove,  
Revived, and cheered, and blessed by thee,  
The God of pardoning love.

Lift up thy countenance serene,  
And let thy happy child  
Behold, without a cloud between,  
The Godhead reconciled. (20)

## HYMNS CITED IN THIS ARTICLE

	British Methodist Hymn Book 1933	American Methodist Hymnal 1932-9
1. Jesus, Lover of my soul	110	338
2. Author of faith, eternal Word	362 alt.	.....
3. Would Jesus have the sinner die?	173 alt.	.....
4. God of unexampled grace	191	.....
5. Arise, my soul, arise! Thy Saviour's sacrifice! (See J. Wesley's " <i>Large</i> " <i>Hymn-Book</i> , 1779)		
6. Open, Lord, my inward ear	465	.....
7. Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine	457	.....
8. Arise, my soul, arise, Shake off thy guilty fears!	368	211
9. Come, O thou traveler unknown	339	311
10. Let earth and heaven combine	142 alt.	.....
11. Christ the Lord is risen today!	204	154
12. Granted is the Saviour's prayer	277	.....
13. Father of everlasting grace	730	.....
14. Away with our fears, Our troubles and tears!	278	.....
15. Spirit of faith, come down	363	183
16. Come, thou everlasting Spirit	765	.....
17. Jesus, the first and last	105	.....
18. Holy, and true, and righteous Lord	570	.....
19. Captain of Israel's host, and guide	608	.....
20. Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost	378	.....



## John Cennick 1718-1755

### Moravian Evangelist and Hymn Writer

JOHN H. JOHANSEN

**I**N MARCH, 1739, John Wesley wrote to a friend: "At Reading I found a young man, Cennick by name, willing to suffer, yea, to die for his Lord." The "young man" was John Cennick, Moravian Evangelist and Hymn Writer, the two hundredth anniversary of whose death occurs on July fourth of this year, and who had as checkered a religious career as a man could possibly have.

Born in the English town of Reading on December 12, 1718, his "grandfather and grandmother were," he says, "very great clothiers who became Quakers, and who suffered the loss of all things,"<sup>1</sup> his grandmother making halfpenny laces for her living. His name, originally *Cennik*, proclaims him of Bohemian stock. John's father joined the Church of England and his mother trained him carefully in the ways of the church, and the child seems to have been unusually assiduous in attending St. Lawrence Church in Reading.

Cennick appears to have been a lad of healthy instincts and tastes. He was fond of play, fond of fine clothes, and fond of praise, but he was afraid to swear or to take God's name in vain. He tells us that he had an obstinate temper, and that his lips were full of lies continually, but that always when he had done anything very wrong, he was afraid to go to bed, lest he should drop into hell before morning. Hutton says that he "was serious beyond his years. He never went to bed without saying his prayers, and promising God how good he would be next day."<sup>2</sup> Often, in moments of bitter repentance, after telling lies or breaking the Sabbath, he pondered on the grim text: "The eye that mocketh his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it." (Proverbs 30:17).

At the age of fifteen young Cennick kicked over the parental traces, and for three or four years devoted himself to a life of frivolous jollity. He played cards, and sang comic songs. He went to horse-races, and saw "sights," though what sort of "sights" he does not tell us. He danced in ballrooms and he talked about the heathen gods. But the giddy life was too giddy to last. At Eastertime in 1735, as he was walking along Cheapside in London, whence he had gone to seek his fortune, he was suddenly smitten by a sense of guilt, or, to use his own expression,

"the hand of the Lord touched me." (Wilks, *op. cit.*, v.) And now he sank from the height of mirth to the depths of despair. For three years he endured the agonies of religious depression and all kinds of errors troubled his agitated mind. He was weary of life, and often prayed for death. "And this while," he tells us, "I had no power over sin, nor the least strength to resist temptation; being carnal and sold under sin, I committed it continually, though not in the eyes of the world. My chief sins were pride, murmuring against God, blasphemy, disobedience, and evil concupiscence; sometimes I strove against them; but, finding myself always conquered, I concluded there was no help." (Wilks, *op. cit.*, VI.)

In vain he tried the ascetic method of starving the body to purify the soul. For some time he ate nothing more than dry bread, potatoes, acorns, the leaves of trees, crab-apples, and even grass. He knelt and prayed nine times a day. He watched. He fasted. He gave money to the poor. He refrained from gross sins. He attended the Sacrament. He went to church twice a day. Yet the more he strove, the more he seemed to be led captive by the devil.

At last, however, deliverance came, and in the very spot which in earlier days he had so much detested, within the walls of St. Lawrence Church. He had been planning to go away to some place of solitude, and as he sat making his plans, he heard the old familiar bell ring once again, summoning the people to prayer. He entered the church, fell down on his knees, and began to murmur, as often before, because his cross seemed heavier than ever was laid on any one else. He thought how untroubled all the children of God would wing their way to heaven, and how full of terror he himself must go down to hell. "I was," he says, "as if the sword of the Lord was dividing asunder my joints and marrow, my soul and spirit; till near the end of the Psalm, when these words were read, 'Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all! And he that putteth his trust in God shall not be destitute;' I had just room to think, who can be more destitute than I? when I was overwhelmed with joy, and I believed there was mercy. My heart danced for joy, and my dying soul revived! I heard the voice of Jesus, saying, 'I am thy salvation.' I no more groaned under the weight of sin. The fears of hell were taken away, and being sensible that Christ loved me, and died for me, I rejoiced in God my Saviour." (Wilks, *op. cit.*, xi) This conversion experience took



place on September 6, 1737, when Cennick was nineteen years old.

During the years of spiritual depression and uncertainty, Cennick had been working as a land surveyor at Reading. Early in 1739 he traveled to Oxford where he met John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield. These were the stirring days of the beginning of the great Evangelical Revival, and now Cennick took his place as one of the leaders in that movement. After having been received into the Fetter Lane Society in London on May 14, 1739, Cennick was appointed by John Wesley as a teacher of a school for colliers' children at Kingswood. The preacher's mantle soon fell on Cennick's shoulders. He preached his first sermon in the open air under a sycamore tree in Kingswood on June 14, 1739, "the Lord bearing witness with my word," he says, "in-somuch that many believed in that hour." (Wilks, *op. cit.*, xv.)

John Cennick has the distinction of having been the first Methodist lay preacher. For eighteen months he served as John Wesley's assistant. But in October, 1740, he parted from Wesley on doctrinal grounds. He differed with Wesley on the doctrine of predestination, and on the doctrine of Christian perfection. Furthermore, Wesley believed in convulsions, groanings, sweats, and fits as signs of conversion; Cennick looked on such things with suspicion and alarm.

Still on fire with evangelistic zeal, Cennick soon found other congenial work to do. He joined forces, first with Howell Harris, the Welsh evangelist, and then with George Whitefield. For five years he was now engaged in preaching and the organizing of societies wherever he preached. He went on a memorable evangelistic tour through Gloucestershire with Harris, meeting with the persecution to which ministers of the Gospel were exposed in these times.

But the chief scene of Cennick's English labors was in North Wiltshire, where he earned the title of "the Apostle of Wiltshire." At Swindon, where he and Harris preached in a place called the Grove, "some rascals fired muskets over their heads, held the muzzles close up to their faces, and made them as black as tinkers; and others brought the local fire-engine and drenched them with dirty water from the ditches."<sup>3</sup> Yet the preachers won the victory, after all. "As they played upon brother Harris," says Cennick in his diary, "I spoke to the congregation; and when they turned their engine on me, he preached, and this continued until they had spoiled the engine."<sup>4</sup> Hutton characterizes Cennick's preaching in these words:

He preached far less about eternal punishment, and far more about the grace of Christ. He preached far less about the judgment day, and far more about the bliss of fellowship with the Friend of sinners. He preached far less like John the Baptist, and far more like John whom Jesus loved. He appealed, not to the nerves but to the heart, and sent his hearers not into convulsions, but into tears. (Hutton, *John Cennick*, p. 28)

As he rode on his mission from village to village, and from town to town, he was not acting on his own, but as the assistant of George Whitefield. Societies were organized at such places as Chippenham, Bath, Foxham, Malmesbury, Swindon, Lyneham, Brinkworth, and in many other villages. He made his headquarters at the village of Tytherton, near Chippenham, where on October 25, 1742, he bought the land on which the settlement was built. Here, along with Whitefield, Howell Harris, and others, he met his exhorters and stewards in conference. He had a body of assistants, preachers, exhorters, and stewards. The Wiltshire preachers, with Cennick at their head, were known as the Wiltshire Association, and the Wiltshire Association, in turn, was part of the great English Association, of which Whitefield was the head.

The more Cennick knew of the Wiltshire villagers the more convinced he became that what they needed was religious education. And so, for their benefit, he prepared some simple manuals of instruction. A *Treatise on the Holy Ghost*, an *Exhortation to Steadfastness*, and a *Short Catechism for the Instruction of Youth*, came from his pen. He published a little volume of hymns entitled *A New Hymnbook*, with an account of his conversion and religious experiences; another entitled *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God in the Days of their Pilgrimage* (1741, 1742); and a third, entitled *Sacred Hymns for the Use of Religious Societies* (1743). Cennick was, therefore, a true pastor and teacher.

Cennick assisted Whitefield until 1745, but on December eighteenth of that year he handed over the care of his Wiltshire Societies to the Moravian Church. He set off on a tour of Germany, spent three months at Herrnhag, and visited the other Moravian centers of Marienborn and Lindheim. He heard Zinzendorf preach, talked with Peter Boehler, and made the acquaintance of Leonard Dober, the first missionary to the slaves on St. Thomas in the West Indies. He became a member of the Moravian Church, and returned to England where he was ordained Deacon in London on September 30, 1749.

Whitefield bore Cennick no ill will, but kept up an affectionate correspondence with him to the end. He wrote to him from

New York, July 5, 1747, as follows:

My dear John, it has been thy meat and drink to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Mayest thou continue in this plan! I wish thee much success, and shall always pray that the work of the Lord may prosper in thy hands. Whether thou hast changed thy principles with thy situation, I know not. I would only caution thee against taking anything for gospel upon the mere authority of man. Go where thou wilt, though thou shouldest be in the purest society under heaven, thou wilt find that the best of men are but men at best, and wilt meet with stumbling blocks enough to teach thee the necessity of a continual dependence on the Lord Jesus, who alone is infallible, and will not give that glory to another.<sup>5</sup>

Immediately upon his return to England in the spring of 1746, Cennick set out for Ireland. In London in 1744 two visitors from Dublin had heard him preach and besought him to come and begin work there. The soil was already well prepared. For a year or more some pious people had been in the habit of meeting for singing and prayer under the leadership of Benjamin LaTrobe, a Baptist probationer; and now, with these as a nucleus, Cennick began preaching in a Baptist Hall in Skinner's Alley. "It was John Cennick," Hutton reminds us, "and not John Wesley, who began the Evangelical Revival in Ireland. He was working in Dublin for more than a year before Wesley arrived on the scene." (Hutton, *History*, 323-4.) In the face of much opposition and persecution Cennick founded a flourishing Society in Dublin of over five hundred members.

While in Dublin a Mr. Joseph Dean of Ballymena in the North of Ireland heard Cennick preach and invited him to come there. Once again the familiar pattern was repeated: fierce opposition and persecution, followed by success and achievement. Between 1746 and 1752 Cennick engaged in preaching and forming religious societies in the counties of Antrim, Down, Derry, Armagh, Tyrone, Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal. He was known to the people as "the preacher," and his fame ran on before him like a herald. During six years he built ten churches and organized forty religious Societies in the North of Ireland. Without a doubt, history proves that Cennick was the chief leader of the Evangelical Revival in the North of Ireland.

But now, at the height of his powers Cennick broke down in body and in mind, and worn out with many labors, he became the victim of mental depression. In 1755 he visited Dublin to open the new Chapel in Booter Lane. Afterwards he intended to visit South Wales. But on Saturday, June 28, 1755, he arrived un-



expectedly at Fetter Lane in London, having ridden on horseback for five days from Holyhead in a raging fever. His illness lasted about a week. He became delirious, and rambled about his friends and his work in Ireland. Among those who came to see him was Bishop John Gambold. The Bishop told him this illness might be his last. "I should like that best of all," he said quietly. "I want to be taken to His arms." Among his favorite verses were the following:

Yes! their last look, serene and clear,  
Shall witness they believers were.

He tried to repeat the familiar lines once more. "Yes! their last look," he whispered, but could go no further. At seven o'clock on the evening of July 4th, he died at the age of 37, and was buried in the Moravian Burial Ground, Chelsea, London. After his death a poem was found in his pocketbook, headed "Nunc Dimittis." This was published, posthumously, in 1757. It expresses submission to the Divine will, but, at the same time, "a desire to depart." In it he says:

O Lamb! I languish till that day I see,  
When Thou wilt say, Come up and be with Me.  
Now twice seven years have I Thy servant been,  
Now let me end my service and my sin.

Erik Routley's "estimate of Cennick as "the best of the minor authors" who followed upon Charles Wesley in the first half of the eighteenth century, seems a just and fair judgment. Cennick's best-known hymn, typical of his style at its best, is "Children of the heavenly King." This hymn appeared originally in twelve four-line stanzas in *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God in the Days of their Pilgrimage*, under the title "Encouragement to Praise." The abbreviated form in six stanzas was given in Whitefield's *Collection*, 1753. It is usually found today in four, five, and six stanza versions. As found in the *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian church* (Bethlehem, Pa., 1920), the hymn has five stanzas.

Children of the heavenly King,  
As ye journey, sweetly sing;  
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,  
Glorious in His works and ways.

We are traveling home to God  
In the way the fathers trod;  
They are happy now, and we  
Soon their happiness shall see.

Lift your eyes, ye sons of light,  
Zion's city is in sight;  
There our endless home shall be,  
There our Lord we soon shall see.

Fear not, brethren; joyful stand  
On the borders of your land;  
Jesus Christ, your Father's Son,  
Bids you undismayed go on.

Lord obediently we go,  
Gladly leaving all below;  
Only Thou our Leader be,  
And we still will follow Thee.

The words of this hymn are simple, and it makes an excellent children's hymn. It is not possible to identify this hymn, or, for that matter, any other of Cennick's hymns, with a particular outward event or special experience of his life. But as Dr. Benson points out, "we cannot catch the spiritual beauty of this hymn of courage and good cheer until we connect it with the life Cennick was leading." That is why we have related in such detail the facts of Cennick's early life and the experiences of his evangelistic campaigns. "It is such experiences as these," Benson says, "of the very time when the hymn was written, that make its actual setting. And out of them it shines in all of its spiritual beauty; the pluck of an unconquerable purpose, the serenity of an untroubled faith, the good cheer of an incorruptible hope." <sup>7</sup>

Cennick has written a pair of hymns for morning and evening which deserve to be better known than they are. Like the foregoing hymn they come from *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God in the Days of Their Pilgrimage* (1742), and like it also they are utterly simple and full of youthful strength. Cennick was only twenty-four years old when these hymns were published. "Rise, my soul, adore Thy Maker," the morning hymn, is not as well known as the evening hymn, "Ere I sleep, for every favor," which is found in the *Methodist Hymn-Book* and the *Presbyterian Hymnary*. It is truly a lovely hymn for the close of the day.

Ere I sleep, for every favor  
Which my God hath bestowed,  
I will bless my Saviour;  
O my Lord, what shall I render  
Unto Thee? Thou shalt be  
This night my Defender.

## THE HYMN

Thou, my Rock, my Strength and Tower,  
 While I sleep, deign to keep,  
 Watch from hour to hour;  
 Visit me with Thy salvation,  
 Be Thou near, that Thy care  
 Guard my habitation.

Leave me not, but ever love me;  
 Let Thy peace be my bliss,  
 Till Thou hence remove me;  
 Then, aroused from peaceful slumber,  
 Let me rise with the wise,  
 Counted in their number.

*Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church*, No. 783

In the preface to the Second Part of *Sacred Hymns for the Use of Religious Societies*, Cennick has these words: "Our Saviour has again given me freedom to give into your hands another little parcel of hymns. I pray they may be sanctified to your dear souls through His blood and wounds, to whose honour they are composed. Let love cover every fault you meet with; and if the Lamb of God blesses these hymns at all to any of God's dear societies, let them praise the Lamb only for them."<sup>8</sup>

Several of Cennick's hymns, in common use today, are taken from this collection, which was published in three parts in Bristol and London, between the years 1743 and 1745. "Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone," which is number 64 in his *Hymns* (1743), is perhaps the best of these, and as Routley says, "it is intensely personal and uncompromisingly evangelical in its language." (*op. cit.*, 253) Six stanzas of the original nine are preserved in *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church* (No. 443), while *The Methodist Hymnal* (Published by The Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, Tenn., 1939, No. 199), has the same hymn in a three-stanza version to the tune DUANE STREET. Let the hymn speak for itself.

Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone  
 He Whom I fix my hopes upon;  
 His track I see and I'll pursue  
 The narrow way, till Him I view.

The way the Holy prophets went,  
 The road that leads from banishment,  
 The King's highway of holiness  
 I'll go; for all His paths are peace.



This is the way I long had sought,  
And mourned because I found it not;  
My grief, my burden long had been,  
Because I could not cease from sin.

The more I strove against its power,  
I sinned and stumbled but the more;  
Till late I heard my Saviour say,  
'Come hither, soul, I am the Way.'

Lo! glad I come, and Thou, blest Lamb,  
Shalt take me to Thee as I am;  
Nothing but sin I Thee can give;  
Nothing but love shall I receive.

Then will I tell to sinners round  
What a dear Saviour I have found;  
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood;  
And say, Behold the way to God!

One can certainly read Cennick's own remarkable religious experience in the third and fourth stanzas of this hymn, and it may be that these personal allusions have discouraged its use.

Cennick has given us an excellent hymn in praise of Christ the High Priest. "Thou great Redeemer, dying Lamb," comes from *Sacred Hymns* (1743), and is headed, "The Priesthood of Christ." It is to be found in the *Methodist Hymn-Book*, but, strange to say, not in the *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church*. The first, second and fourth stanzas are:

Thou great Redeemer, dying Lamb,  
We love to hear of Thee;  
No music's like Thy charming name,  
Nor half so sweet can be.

O may we ever hear Thy voice  
In mercy to us speak;  
And in our Priest will we rejoice,  
Thou great Melchisedec.

When we appear in yonder cloud,  
With all His favoured throng;  
Then will we sing more sweet, more loud,  
And Christ shall be our song.

A number of other hymns of Cennick are found in the Moravian hymnal, but are not in general use in other denominational hymn books. These include "Lamb of God, beloved, once for

sinner slain," "Christ is our Master, Lord, and God," "Hail, Alpha and Omega, hail," and "Cast thy burden on the Lord."

Perhaps the best-known lines that Cennick ever wrote, and which appealed so strongly to John Wesley that he constantly used them, and had them engraved on his family teapot, are the familiar words of "Grace before meat:"

Be present at our table, Lord;  
Be here and everywhere adored;  
From Thy all-bounteous hand our food  
May we receive with gratitude.

These words may be sung to either of the tunes, OLD HUNDRETH or WAREHAM, the latter being extremely popular in the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America.

Before we leave Cennick we must refer to a hymn that always includes his name in its compound editorial ascription. "Lo, he comes, with clouds descending," one of our most solemn and moving hymns, is, as we sing it today, a composition of three authors, Cennick, Wesley, and Madan." In 1752 Cennick published the original stanzas, two of which we now give:

Lo! He cometh, countless trumpets,  
Blow before His bloody sign!  
'Midst ten thousand saints and angels  
See the Crucified shine.  
Allelujah!  
Welcome, welcome bleeding Lamb!  
All who love Him view His glory,  
Shining in His bruised Face:  
His dear Person on the rainbow,  
Now His people's heads shall raise:  
Happy mourners!  
Now on clouds He comes! He comes!

Matthew Wilks describes Cennick as a man "rather below the middle stature, of a fair countenance but of a fairer mind. A good understanding, an open temper, and tender heart characterized the man. His Christian qualities were not less distinguishable. If unaffected humility, deadness to the world, a life of communion with God, and a cheerful reliance on a crucified Saviour constitute the real Christian, he was one in an eminent degree." (Wilks, *op. cit.*, xxii). His life-ambition and character is well expressed in one of his earliest hymns, written in 1740.

Be with me, Lord, where'er I go,  
Teach me what Thou wouldst have me do;  
Suggest whate'er I think or say,  
Direct me in the narrow way.

Prevent me lest I harbor pride,  
Lest I in my own strength confide;  
Show me my weakness, let me see  
I have my power, my all, from Thee.

Enrich me always with Thy love,  
My kind Protector ever prove;  
Lord, put Thy seal upon my breast,  
And let Thy Spirit on me rest.

Assist and teach me how to pray,  
Incline my nature to obey;  
What Thou abhorrest, let me flee,  
And only love what pleaseth Thee.

O May I never do my will,  
But Thine, and only Thine, fulfill;  
Let all my time and all my ways,  
Be spent and ended to Thy praise.

*Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church*, No. 767.

Cennick's best is, as Routley says, "quiet and unpretentious, polished and seemly, and if we neglect it our worship is noticeably and unnecessarily impoverished." (*Op. cit.*, 258)

1. Matthew Wilks, *Cennick's Village Discourses; Or, Forty Plain and Short Sermons on the More Important Doctrines of the Gospel. To which is Prefixed the Life of the Author* (London: William Tegg & Co., 1852, a new edition), p. iii.

2. J. E. Hutton, *John Cennick; A Sketch* (London: Moravian Publication Office, n.d.), p. 6.

3. J. E. Hutton, *A History of the Moravian Church* (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1909), p. 320.

4. Hutton, *John Cennick*, p. 25. See pages 23-28 for many other instances of this kind.

5. Quoted by John Telford, *The Methodist Hymn-Book Illus.*, (London, Culley, 2nd Ed. Rev., 1909. p. 107.)

6. *I'll Praise My Maker* (London, 1951), p. 258.

7. Louis F. Benson, *Studies Of Familiar Hymns*, Second Series (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1926), p. 52, 53.

8. Quoted by Josiah Miller, *Singers and Songs of the Church* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1869), p. 218.

9. See the three versions given by John Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology*. (London: John Murray, 1908), p. 681.



## “With Grateful Hearts, O Father”

1

With grateful hearts, O Father,  
We worship Thee this day.  
Draw near us as we gather  
Within these walls to pray.  
To honor and adore Thee  
We built this holy place,  
And humbly we implore Thee  
To crown it with thy grace.

2

Lord, we would hear Thee speaking,  
Thy Word, the sacred scroll.  
Bless those who come here seeking  
The bread that feeds the soul.  
O may the living waters  
Of knowledge, truth and love  
Refresh thy sons and daughters  
With blessings from above.

3

May children's happy voices  
Be heard in gladsome praise,  
While every heart rejoices  
To see them learn thy ways.  
May all thy people sharing  
In fellowship divine,  
In Christ-like service daring  
Adorn this House of thine.

4

Grant Lord that by thy favor  
We have not built in vain.  
Enter, O Blessed Saviour,  
And ever here remain.  
O let some heavenly splendor  
Transform this wood and stone  
That unto Thee we render  
To be thy royal throne. - Charles Parkin

Tune: AURELIA

(Copyright, 1955, by Charles Parkin. Published by permission.)  
Written for the consecration of the Parish House of the Ridgewood  
Methodist Church, Ridgewood, N. J. April 24, 1955.

# Favorite Hymns Of Famous People

DONALD P. HUSTAD

WE ALL AGREED that "Club Time" had been a "miracle" program, even after it had succumbed to the onslaught of television early in 1954. We had had eight years on the ABC network, most of it after all the other hymn shows - including Edward MacHugh, Richard Maxwell, and "Hymns of All Churches" - had given way to "more commercial" formats.

It was the personal interest of Mr. Herbert J. Taylor, President of the sponsoring Club Aluminum Products Company, who was responsible for the inception of the program idea, and the continuance of the broadcasts. Mr. Taylor has come into national prominence this year, appearing on the cover of *Newsweek*, February 28, as the President of Rotary International. He is an old fashioned Methodist and was for years teacher of the high school age Sunday School class in the Methodist Church of Park Ridge, Illinois. It was he who determined that ours was to be a program of standard Protestant hymnody, with familiar gospel hymns getting about half of the attention. We presented four hymns in each fifteen-minute broadcast.

The show was a "miracle" in its musical objectives as well. We endeavored to demonstrate that hymn singing need not have a piously stylized approach to phrasing or tempo, and that the small choral ensemble could bring a "string quartet approach" to matters of ensemble. Our producer, Mr. Henry Selinge, brought to the show many years of experience as a string player in the Minneapolis and Chicago Symphony Orchestras, as a specialist in chamber music performance, and as Director of music, for many years, of a leading Chicago radio station.

The personnel of the choir were young Chicago artists who were well equipped as soloists in their own right, and yet were keenly interested in developing a good choral ensemble. Incidentally, it was also considered important by the sponsor, that they be in basic accord with the meaning and intent of a hymn program. "Club Time's" soloist was the bass baritone George Beverly Shea, now soloist for the international evangelist, Billy Graham.

The arrangements for the choir endeavored to highlight the meaning of the hymn texts. Besides providing an antiphonal and accompanying function for the solo voice, we endeavored to achieve something a bit more interesting as choral music, using free polyphony, modulation and re-harmonization, particularly increasing the use of secondary chords and secondary sevenths.

Shortly after the program was well under way, our advertising agency conceived a feature which added a good deal of interest to the program and which was presented almost every week for more than seven years. It was called "Favorite Hymns of Famous People." An agency representative contacted leading personalities from business, politics, sports, entertainment, the professions, and from public service organizations, whose names were appearing regularly in the newspapers. Many of these individuals were happy to name their favorite hymns, and they were then featured on a subsequent broadcast. Of course, there was a good deal of duplication; of the more than 250 individual persons whose names were presented, 115 different hymns were named as favorites. High on the list of repetitions were "Abide with me" and "Lead, Kindly Light," with nineteen votes each. The latter hymn was chosen by such people as President and Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower, opera singer Marjorie Lawrence, golfer Chick Evans, author Bruce Barton, and statesman Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.

Next on the list were "Onward, Christian Soldiers" with eleven votes, "Nearer My God to Thee" with ten votes, and "Battle Hymn of the Republic" with ten votes. "Rock of ages," "Dear Lord and Father of mankind," and "Eternal Father, strong to save," were each named seven times, the latter probably because many navy men were contacted just after the close of World War II. "Faith of our Fathers" was the favorite of six famous people. It may be surprising to discover that "The Old Rugged Cross" also received only six votes, including two presentations as "the favorite hymn of the men in the armed forces" and "the favorite hymn of the American people;" it was evidently not the predominant favorite of *famous* people!

Five votes each were received by "How firm a foundation," "In the garden," and four votes by "The Church's one foundation," "A mighty fortress is our God," "O God our help in ages past," and "O come all ye faithful." Five hymns were represented by three votes each: "Let the lower lights be burning," "O Master let me walk with thee," "I love to tell the story," "God of our fathers" and "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult." Seventeen hymns were chosen by two persons each, and the remainder were selected by one only.

Some of the choices were most significant. General Jonathan Wainwright, hero of Corregidor and prisoner of the Japanese for many years, named "In the hour of trial." Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Arctic explorer, chose "From Greenland's icy mountains."



Ralph Bunche, Negro statesman, chose the hymn which speaks of "the loftier race," "These things shall be." Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra T. Benson named "Come, come, come ye saints," which was sung by his great-grandfather and others in the original band of Mormon settlers, as they crossed the plains on their way to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. J. Edgar Hoover named the hymn which has had particular significance to rescue missions, "Throw out the lifeline."

Football coach Herman Hickman may have had his tongue in his cheek in choosing "The fight is on" but we were all hopeful that Nellie Tayloe Ross' selection of "How firm a foundation" was meaningful, - she was then Director of the U.S. Mint.

Perhaps the most unfamiliar "favorites" were "There is a happy land" named by actor Maurice Evans; and "O Lord I am not worthy," chosen by Justice Frank Murphy; and "When I shall read my title clear," which research had disclosed to be a favorite hymn of Abraham Lincoln.

Several of the personalities whose favorite hymns were featured, mentioned particular spiritual significance for their chosen hymns. Radio personality. Johnny Olson named his favorite in a quotation of the last words he heard from his mother: "Good by, then Johnny. Be a good boy - be sure to pray, - and some day we'll meet again - When the roll is called up yonder" . . . J. C. Penney, department store executive, chose "God will take care of you," and told us that "during a severe illness he learned anew the power of God, the comfort that His love can bring, and the hope that lies in worship of Him," as he heard this hymn sung in a hospital chapel. Judge Luther W. Youngdahl, in naming "What a friend we have in Jesus," wrote us, "I would feel insecure were it not for my faith in God and the fact that I shall be able to rely on Him for guidance and support when discouragement and uncertainty come."

Mark H. Harrington, then President of the National Tuberculosis Association, said, "Twenty years ago my wife was fatally ill with tuberculosis. During the long four years Mrs. Harrington fought for recovery, I came to realize how important it was to her to have a personal relationship with God." Mr. Harrington chose "In the garden."

Many of the favorites were named because of their childhood and family associations. Others had less significance, but still a strong attachment to the individual, and some choices had their humorous reasons. Warren R. Austin, former U.S. Repre-

sentative to the United Nations, remembered "All hail the power of Jesus" name, "as a hymn he most enjoyed when he sang in the choir of a Vermont church. Admiral Richard E. Byrd recalled that during the long Antarctic winter when he had only his phonograph for company, that he found it wonderfully comforting to hear, again and again, "O holy night," telling the story of the birth of Jesus. The hymn traditionally sung at the close of the baccalaureate service at Lawrence College (Wisconsin), "Saviour again to thy dear name," continued to be the favorite of Nathan Pusey, even after he became the President of Harvard University. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was chosen by news commentator Henry J. Taylor, because he remembered that it was the hymn General George S. Patton Jr. requested to be played before sending his men into action in Europe. I suppose we enjoyed as much as any the explanation that Robert Reid, Editor of *Country Gentleman*, gave in choosing "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult." "It is one of the few hymns, that, with my voice. I can rear back and sing loud," he said.

All of the musicians on "Club Time" were keenly interested to learn of the favorite hymns of today's opera and concert artists. Generally speaking, they are the best hymns, poetically and musically. Dorothy Kirsten asked for "How firm a foundation;" Ezio Pinza, "The spacious firmament on high;" Marion Anderson, "Abide with me;" Gladys Swarthout, "O God our help in ages past;" and Jeanette MacDonald, "Battle Hymn of the Republic." John Charles Thomas' choice of the simple "Tell me the story of Jesus" was explained when he told us that he had first sung it in a trio with his father and mother in church gatherings many years ago! Robert Shaw requested the Bach chorale "Ah, Lord, when my last end is come;" Lilly Pons and Andre Kostelanetz, "Rock of ages;" Helen Traubel, "O Master, let me walk with Thee;" and Bruno Walter, "We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing." Research revealed that Walter Damrosch and Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink had cherished memories of hymns closely associated with their homeland: "Ein feste Burg" and "Stille Nacht."

I hope that we can be forgiven our reminiscences of eight wonderful years singing hymns over a major American network. All readers of THE HYMN will undoubtedly share with us the desire that hymns may again be heard in the homes of America. Perhaps television should replace something which it has evidently displaced.

# Hymns In Periodical Literature

Reviews by Ruth Ellis Messenger

*The Methodist Recorder*, December 9, 1954, contained four articles marking the twenty-first anniversary of the publication of the *Methodist Hymn Book*, by a union of the three Methodist Churches in Britain.

T. F. GLASSON, "Great Hymns that tell the Nativity Story." Dr. Glasson comments on the increase of Nativity hymns in the 1933 edition due to the use of the united hymnal resources, and to the reception of hitherto unused hymns, representative of several foreign languages and many periods of history. Of the Christmas hymns already favorites throughout Methodism, Charles Wesley's "Hark the herald angels" is given first place.

FRANK G. PELLOW, "Hymns our Congregations Prefer." Mr. Pellow gives the result of a survey to discover which hymns had been used most frequently at Sunday services during the whole period since 1933, or a large part of it. Of more than fifty replies, received from all parts of England, thirty-one covered an average of eleven years. The seventy-seven most popular choices are listed with "In heavenly love abiding" at the head. In the list there are seven by Charles Wesley and three by Isaac Watts, but their hymns were actually sung oftener than those of any other hymn writers. Comments accompanying the replies indicated that the choice of the minister was not necessarily that of the congregation, that hymns with popular tunes were used too often, and that the great hymns preferred by earlier generations are now neglected. (*The Christian Century*, January 19, 1955, has a brief news note on "Survey Popularity of Hymns in Methodist Use.")

GILBERT THOMAS, "Here is a Rich Collection of Poetry." Mr. Thomas is interested in the perennial theme of Poetry in Hymns, reaching the conclusion that "a good hymn need not necessarily be good poetry; it must primarily stand or fall by tests peculiar to itself." Charles Wesley (whose hymns are appraised elsewhere in this issue) has been recognized as a poet in England and is thus acclaimed by the author: "Charles Wesley was a born poet in whom, more often perhaps than in any other hymn writer, whether poet or not, there occurred that miracle whereby, speaking for himself, he spoke also for his fellowmen."

CLIFFORD W. TOWLSON, "Memories of the Committee at Work." A distinguished member of the Committee, The Reverend Clifford Towlson writes of his recollections of the Committee at work. He brings before the reader a group, enthusiastic, open-



minded, humorous, kindly and spiritually alive. Out of this spirit the *Hymnal* emerged, "a spirit which was a happy augury of the united Methodism which was being born, and of which the *Hymn Book* was a symbol and an instrument."

LEE HASTINGS BRISTOL, JR., "Ours is a Singing Faith," *Christian Herald*, December, 1954.

Lee Hastings Bristol, Jr., co-editor of *Hymns for Children and Grownups*, brings forward a number of suggestions resulting from his editorial experience, for making "hymns more effective in our church and in our daily life." The hymn can be made more effective in church through periods of regular hymn practicing by the congregation; by occasionally substituting a hymn for a responsive reading; by printing notes on the hymns in the regular weekly bulletin; through informal talks given by organist or choir master; by having the Junior Choir sing once a month at the Sunday morning service; by introducing a new hymn with comments by a member of the clergy.

Experience with children has convinced Mr. Bristol that appropriate hymns for this group are important, in the home as well as in church. The hymn sung as a grace at meals, before starting the day and at bed time, may be chosen from the standard repertory of the church. Children love to sing them.

For all Christians, familiarity with history of hymns and their makers, and a knowledge of what hymns have meant to others, are sources of unity not to be underestimated. Mr. Bristol writes with great persuasiveness regarding all these aspects of our "singing faith."

SCOTT CORBETT, "A Man of Several Voices," *The Atlantic*, March, 1955.

Decidedly in "lighter vein," Mr. Corbett tells us of his unusual voice, actually three distinct and different voices, which prevent him from singing hymns in church. Church goers, in their singing capacity, he classifies as "warblers" and "mumblers," taking a very dim view of the efforts of both. He thinks a hymn book published for "mumblers" would have a record sale.

JOHN H. JOHANSEN, "The Olney Hymns," *Religion in Life*, "Spring, 1955.

To relate once more in sincere and appealing fashion, the story of The Olney Hymns, is no simple task. Mr. Johansen succeeds in doing this, first presenting the lives of Newton and Cowper who collaborated in producing the collection; then appraising the hymns. The circumstances in which Newton and Cowper had

lived and in which they wrote the 348 hymns (Newton, 280 and Cowper, 68) have always attracted attention. Mr. Johansen has given us the impressions made upon preceding critics: Horder, Benson, Currie, Martin, Gregory and Routley, - a valuable feature of the article.

We are reminded that today The Olney Hymns constitute a collection for compilers, who have chosen from twelve to twenty to use in current hymnals. Of the Cowper hymns, Mr. Johansen selects for their special values, "Oh! For a closer walk with God," "God moves in a mysterious way," and "Sometimes a light surprises" - "Cowper's most perfect composition in hymn form." From Newton's hymns he selects "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound," "Come, my soul, thy suit prepare," and "Glorious things of Thee are spoken." The author's comment on the collection is characteristic of the whole article in which the lives of the men and their work have been so skillfully interwoven. "As we might expect from two men of such deep and sore experiences, their hymns contain more than beautiful poetic fancies. They are full of the deep realities of human experience."

JOHANNES KNUDSEN, "New Hymnal in Denmark," *Lutheran Quarterly*. Feb., 1955.

"The publication of a new hymnal is an event of far-reaching importance in the life of a church." With this in mind, the author reports on *The Danish Hymnbook*, first authorized and printed in 1953, having been seven years in preparation. An historical survey of the preceding hymnals from 1528-1897 reveals an approximate fifty-year period between revisions. Of the 754 hymns included in the new book, 63 per cent are the work of Thomas Kingo (b. 1634) and Adolf Brorsen (b. 1694) but 267 hymns or about 35 percent were written by Nicholai Grundtvig (b. 1783). In effect, three writers only are represented. Furthermore, the revision has been restricted to a re-consideration of the historic Danish hymn tradition. On the contrary, there have been great changes in the use of melodies due to the revolutionary work of the Danish organist and composer Thomas Laub (1852-1927).

It should be recalled that the Danish Church is a State Church in which, as Mr. Knudsen tells us, the impact of Grundtvig's hymns has been so great as to differentiate it from neighboring Lutheran Churches. This indicates his tremendous influence in hymnody further attested by Bishop Amundsen of Denmark who



is quoted as saying that "the hymns sung by the church constitute its most important confession of faith."

SIMEON STYLITES, "If the Hymnal were only true!," *The Christian Century*, March 9, 1955.

This is a brief letter to the Editor voicing the author's regret that personal expressions of faith, assurance and salvation; also expressions that betoken an active social Christianity and a living confidence in the church, while true in hymns, are apparently false in human lives. "A Society for Making the Hymnal Come True" is suggested.

The following articles which cannot be reviewed in full, due to lack of space, are listed below with brief mention of their subject matter.

CLAUDIA S. BACHMAN, "Music in the Christian Home," *The Sunday School Times*, December 11, 1954. The value of hymns in family worship and private devotions. Mrs. Bachman testifies to the work of The Hymn Society in spreading information about hymns.

ERNEST K. EMURIAN, "Please Don't Offend," *The Pulpit*, October, 1954. A protest against changing the text of hymns to please current taste or theological opinion. For example, "My Jesus, I love thee," becomes "Lord Jesus, I love thee;" "From all the dark places on earth's heathen races" becomes "From all the dark places on earth's needy races."

BENSON Y. LANDIS, "Hymns from the Country," *Town and Country Church*, April, 1955. Enumerates many hymns in general use that have come out of country church experience or rural surroundings. For example, "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," "Rock of Ages," Abide with me," "New every morning is the love," and others.

ADDISON H. LEITCH, "Ye Olde Thyme Religion," *The United Presbyterian*, March 22, 1954. The author deplores, among other things, the association of third-rate hymnody with the so-called "old-fashioned Gospel."

L. DAVID MILLER, "Some Hymns are Forbidden," *The Lutheran*, March 16, 1955. This is headed "Three-quarters of those in our hymnals are frozen assets. A wealth of good music is just waiting to be discovered." Many fine suggestions are made.

CARL J. SCHERZER, "Music hath Charms," *Religion and Health*, March, 1955. A hospital chaplain writes on the therapeutic effects of music, with suggestions applicable to congregational singing.



## Reviews

*The Fellowship Hymnal*, Edited by J. Obert Kempton, James R. Sydnor. Published by The National Council of the Churches of Christ in America, New York, N. Y.

*The Fellowship Hymnal* has been published in response to many requests for a hymnal designed for religious services in institutions. In some respects, it is a successor to *Hymns of Fellowship* which was published in 1945 in response to a similar need. Publication of the present book was undertaken upon the initiative of the Department of Pastoral Services of the National Council of Churches and the Association of Mental Hospital Chaplains, in consultation with chaplains from hospitals, penal institutions, veteran administration hospitals, and juvenile correctional institutions. Advice was sought from the Department of Worship and the Arts of the National Council of Churches.

(Those interested in this type of hymnal will recall that the fourth edition, enlarged and revised, of *Hymns of Hope and Courage*, edited by the late Anton T. Boisen, was reviewed in the July, 1953, issue of THE HYMN by Alfred B. Haas. Mr. Haas' comments on the various considerations confronting those who prepare such a hymnal are worth review.)

In the preface of *The Fellowship Hymnal* the following guiding principles are set forth; selection of good music, keeping in mind familiar and singable tunes; choice of good words, lyrical in quality and primarily suitable for institutional worship; a wholesome expression of the Christian faith and life.

The committee entrusted with the

preparation of this hymnal has, in the opinion of this reviewer, been eminently successful in following the principles set forth above.

The first twenty pages contain worship material. It is refreshing to find that a wise course has been followed in selection and arrangement of services of worship, responsive readings, prayers, and helpful readings. The prayers show careful editing and thoughtful arrangement. The typography is inviting and the pages well laid out. The order of worship which is suggested, presumably for weekly use, is liturgically sound, as is the service for holy communion. It is plainly evident that the editors have kept foremost in their thinking the needs of those for whom the book has been prepared.

There is an excellent summary of the seasons of the Christian Year on the final page of service materials, and it is to be hoped that the National Council of Churches or some other agency will make it available in pamphlet form for use in religious education in churches which will not have this particular hymnal. In subsequent editions of the hymnal it is to be hoped that straight pagination of the section containing the worship materials will be substituted for the present system of numbering separate items within the pages, thus making the first hymn number 139.

The editors of the hymnals have been very successful in their book. It is certainly one which will meet the needs of institutions. But, not only is this true, but it ought to have a wide sale in churches desiring a "secondary" hymnal, not to mention summer conference centers, hotels, camps, ships, and interdenominational gatherings.

There is little fault to be found with the selection of hymns. One wonders about the advisability of including the spiritual "Were you there?" in view of its oft-repeated refrain: "Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble," which might be a bit too realistic description of the unfortunate experiences of persons mentally ill. The exquisite hymn "Lord, as to Thy dear cross" has been included, but one questions the use of ST. ANN—with its rather militant cadences. The alteration of "My Jesus, I love Thee" to "Lord Jesus, I love Thee" is a felicitous one, as is the substitution of the word "faithful" for "prayerful" in the third stanza of "I would be true."

The editing of tunes has been handled masterfully, with a number of wise transpositions to lower keys, notably LANCASHIRE. The tunes throughout seem to have been selected within the principles set forth in the Preface, and in no case has there been any effort to be startling or unique in this area.

The hymn "How firm a foundation" is one which undoubtedly has lines of comfort, and healing, but its five stanzas make it rather tedious; surely three are enough to sing without taxing those who make use of it. Among the number of spirituals included, one of them strikes this reviewer as somewhat questionable: "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen," which might lead to some rather interesting speculation regarding the value of psychiatry and counseling.

All things considered, the *Fellowship Hymnal* deserves wide usage both inside and outside institutions, hospitals, prisons, etc. It ought to have wide sale.

—GEORGE LITCH KNIGHT

## Among Our Contributors

THE REVEREND EDWARD HOUGHTON is a well-known Methodist minister of Long Hanborough, Oxfordshire, England. He is the author of *Breadth of Mind* and other writings.

MR. DONALD P. HUSTAD is Director of the Sacred Music Department of Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Ill.

THE REVEREND JOHN H. JOHANSEN, pastor of Christ Moravian Church, Winston-Salem, N. C. has contributed his article on "John Cennick" following that on "Paul Gerhardt" (*The Hymn*, July 1954). His articles on hymn writers, especially those on "James Montgomery" and "The Olney Hymns" appearing in *Religion and Life*, are rapidly establishing his reputation as a leading American hymnologist.

THE REVEREND CHARLES PARKIN, of Glen Rock, N. J. is a member of the Methodist Board of Home Missions. He has written a number of hymns, among them "O God, whose word abiding," a new hymn on the Bible and an "Easter Hymn" recently published in *The Pastor's Journal*.

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